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# LLNL Lessons Learned LLNL

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## Monitor Contents of Paper Recycling Boxes

Recently, a Lawrence Livermore National Lab (LLNL) worker inadvertently placed a 1-inch metal plug (see Figure 1) into an office wastepaper recycling box. The area custodian emptied the contents into a dumpster, which remained locked when not being filled.

Following Lab procedure, the full dumpster was taken under LLNL escort to an offsite commercial shredder. An LLNL worker monitored the activity as the wastepaper was deposited into the 5/8-inch commercial strip shredder.

Unfortunately, the steel plug was not discovered when the wastepaper was emptied into the commercial shredder. The plug shattered the shredder blades (see Figure 2), causing \$12,260 damage to the unit.

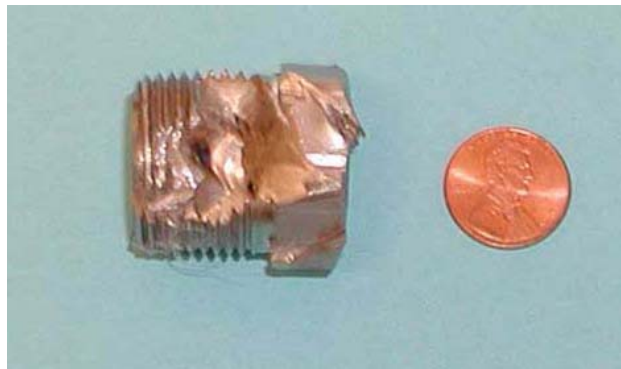


Figure 1. The hardened stainless steel plug

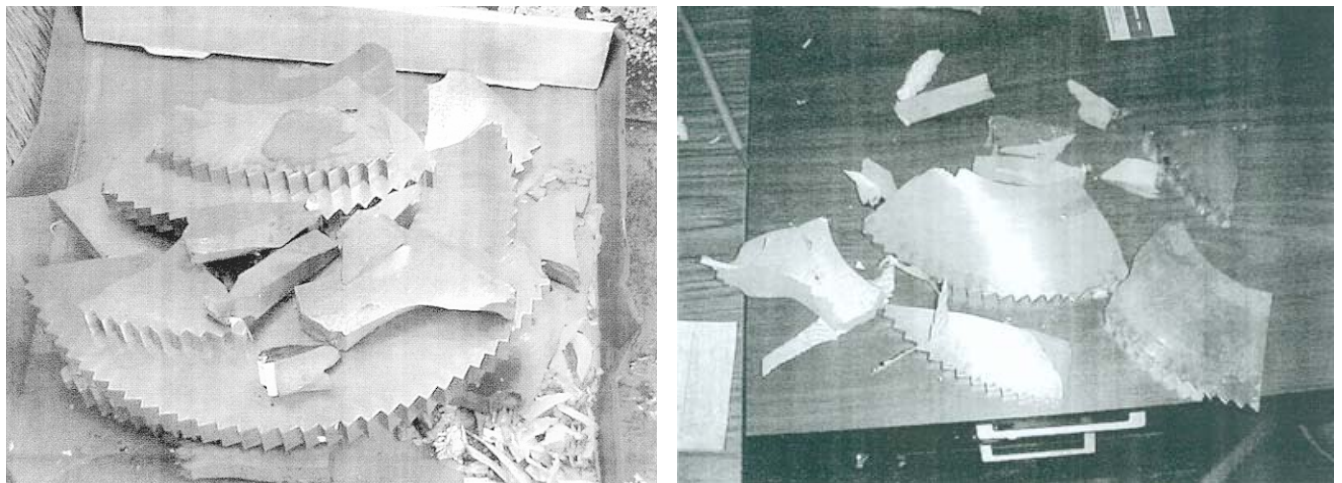


Figure 2. Two views of the shattered shredder blades.

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### **Analysis**

- Paper is a major source of waste generated at LLNL.
- The list of items acceptable for paper recycling includes: plain paper envelopes (no plastic); ledger paper with color printing and/or photos; colored paper; manila file folders; sticky notes in limited quantity; white paper (staples and paper clips OK); laser print and fax paper; computer printouts; paper with recycled content; shredded paper; Lab phone directories; softbound reports; newspaper and magazines.
- The vendor performs minimal sorting of the contents as they empty the dumpster into the shredder. It is up to the individual LLNL worker to monitor what they place in their paper recycling boxes.

### **Recommended Action for LLNL Employees**

1. Use your waste paper container appropriately. Monitor what you throw away.
2. Do not throw metal or other hard objects into paper recycling containers, although staples and paper clips are allowed.